

# Human Performance Group Factual Report

## Attachment 4

### Interview of Bryan Crowe, Dixie Pipeline Controller

Carmichael, Mississippi  
DAC 08 MR 001

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

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Investigation of:

CARMICHAEL, MISSISSIPPI ACCIDENT

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 \* Docket No.: DCA-08-MP-001  
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Interview of: BRYAN CROWE

Enterprise Pipeline  
 Liquid Control Center  
 Houston, TX

Friday,  
 November 2, 2007

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to Notice,  
 at 2:26 p.m.

BEFORE: STEPHEN M. JENNER  
 National Transportation Safety Board

## APPEARANCES:

STEPHEN M. JENNER  
National Transportation Safety Board

JEFF MYERS  
Regional Manager  
Liquid Control  
EPCO, Inc.

JIM GONYEAU  
Dixie Pipeline

GREG CHAPMAN  
Manager, Liquid Control

I N D E XITEMPAGE

Interview of Bryan Crowe:

By Mr. Jenner

4

I N T E R V I E W

(2:26 p.m.)

MR. JENNER: Today is November 2nd, 2007. It is 2:26 Central Daylight Time. Currently, we're in Houston, Texas at Enterprise Pipeline Liquid Control Center, and we are here to conduct interviews regarding the incident that occurred on November 1st in Mississippi involving a product release.

We'll go around the room and introduce ourselves. My name is Stephen Jenner. I'm with the NTSB.

MR. CROWE: My name is Bryan Crowe. I'm with Dixie Pipeline.

MR. MYERS: Jeff Myers, Regional Manager, Liquid Control, EPCO, Inc.

MR. GONYEAU: Jim Gonyeau, Dixie Pipeline.

MR. CHAPMAN: Greg Chapman, Manager of Liquid Control.

MR. JENNER: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF BRYAN CROWE

BY MR. JENNER:

Q. Okay, Bryan, we're going to start with you. If I can get you to state your name and spell it?

A. My name is Bryan Crowe, B-r-y-a-n, C-r-o-w-e.

Q. Okay. What is your -- who are you employed by?

A. Dixie Pipeline Company.

Q. And what is your position with Dixie Pipeline?

A. I am a dispatcher/controller.

1           Q.    Okay.  Were you controlling the pipeline when this  
2 incident occurred?

3           A.    I was.

4           Q.    Okay.  What I'd like to do is ask you what you saw  
5 yesterday, and sort of recount as much detail as you need, to give  
6 us a picture of what went on.

7           A.    At 10:35, Carmichael Unit 2 went down on low suction.  
8 My line pressure went from 1411 discharge to 154 psi, and flow  
9 past Carmichael went to 7,126.  My Yellow Creek pressure was  
10 dropping, and at that moment, Butler (ph.) was starting to come  
11 down also.  I knew at that time it wasn't -- I didn't think it was  
12 an equipment failure.  I knew exactly what it was.  I immediately  
13 shut down Yellow Creek's pump, which is on the suction side of  
14 Carmichael, and I closed Yellow Creek's station suction valve, and  
15 I got Robert, which is the controlling supervisor at the time, and  
16 I told him of the situation.  I started Butler, and I pulled off  
17 the pack off the line at Carmichael, because I knew there was a  
18 leak somewhere around the area, and I immediately started calling  
19 sole (ph.) personnel.  I got John Purvis (ph.) and Jerry (ph.)  
20 from Hattiesburg.  I got them going east, and I got Milton Murray  
21 (ph.) and Stuart -- I don't know his last name -- from Demopolis  
22 heading west.

23                I started shutting down the main line.  I had two pumps,  
24 6,000 barrels an hour, going up against Yellow Creek.  I dropped  
25 both units at Hattiesburg.  I called Hattiesburg Enterprise and

1 Hattiesburg Targa (ph.). Couldn't get a hold of Targa, but I got  
2 a hold of Enterprise, and I got them to shut the line down,  
3 because that would buy me a little bit of time. I could pack up  
4 my line and not make an unsafe condition on the west side of  
5 Yellow Creek.

6 I continued calling -- I called Butler area 911 first,  
7 and then I called -- and then I received a call from XXX XXX  
8 She's a landowner, reporting there's a major leak and explosion.  
9 I could hear it in the background. She was freaking out; her  
10 house was at 8520 County Road 630, in Shubuta, Mississippi. Her  
11 phone number is on there, and I asked her what county she was in,  
12 and she said Clarke County. So, I immediately called Clarke  
13 County 911. Her phone conversation got cut off before there was -  
14 - I don't know what happened. I called Clarke County 911, I told  
15 them there was a leak, it was propane pipeline, it was the real  
16 thing, and they said they had three units dispatched to the scene  
17 already. And I continued making calls, started shutting my  
18 mainline down, because I still had a lot of flow going up there.  
19 I had to shut down Grangeville and I had to shut down Mount  
20 Bellevue, and I continued pulling off -- Demopolis units were  
21 already on suction, so increasing into the tanks there wouldn't  
22 help me out any, because my units were already on and on suction.  
23 I just let them go down on the suction. At 10:46, I still didn't  
24 know which side -- I still wasn't sure which side of Carmichael  
25 the leak was on. At 10:46, I received a call from Turner Duvall

1 (ph.), stating there were four major explosions. They had fire  
2 200 feet in the air, two columns; one of white, one of black  
3 smoke. He says the leak is right where Hunter Crude Oil (ph.)  
4 crosses Dixie, and also John had reported in, the guy from  
5 Hattiesburg, he had a contractor in the area, and he was directing  
6 them to the south side at 4-37-43, which is on the east side,  
7 because at that time, that's where we suspected it was at. We  
8 continued making calls, shutting down the main line.

9 Joe Depsey (ph.) called from Hunter Oil. He said there  
10 was a line -- that his line was shut down and blocked off in the  
11 area, because it was in the immediate area where we were at. Joe  
12 Depsey. We shut Butler station suction valve. We shut Carmichael  
13 station suction and discharge valve, and then at 11:39, John  
14 Purvis reported that 4-37-43 was closed, which is the valve on the  
15 east side of Carmichael, and Jerry closed the main block (ph.)  
16 valve at 4-22-63 at 12:36, which is on the west side of  
17 Carmichael.

18 At that time, everything was turned over to the field,  
19 and they took it from there. I didn't bother them, because I knew  
20 they had their hands full, that we did everything we could at that  
21 time, so there was no reason for me to call. So, after that, I  
22 really don't have any information.

23 Q. Okay, thank you. I see that you're referring to a sheet  
24 here, the first line is dated 11/1/2007. Is this your notes?

25 A. This is what I pulled off of my notes. As -- when



1 everything was going, happening, I didn't write down all the exact  
2 times, so this is the best that I can recall. Some of the  
3 information could be off a little bit, but all the shutdown times  
4 and stuff, I went through my event log and pulled times on that,  
5 so that is correct time. The phone calls, I just kind of tried to  
6 put it in order, because there was so much information and stuff  
7 going through. I was just trying to fill stuff. My number one  
8 priority was getting field personnel off to the scene, trying to  
9 verify where the leak was, and getting the line shut off, and  
10 getting the pressure off the line. So, yes, that's what that is.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. That is my timeline.

13 Q. Great. Just to -- I appreciate that summary. What made  
14 you concerned that -- I know from operators, you get a bunch of  
15 alarms of different significance. What piece of information made  
16 you concerned about the integrity of the pipeline?

17 A. My discharge pressure at Carmichael station went from  
18 1,411 psi to 154, I believe, in one scan. That's a huge drop. I  
19 either blew out a transmitter line, or the line had a catastrophic  
20 failure, and at the same time, Yellow Creek's pressure dropped,  
21 and that's when I knew it was a line failure and not a -- when you  
22 have two separate stations doing the same thing, I knew it -- I  
23 knew what it was. And I had this, close off Yellow Creek's valve,  
24 because I don't want a fuel -- because we had so much flood rate  
25 going up that I didn't want to fuel it anymore. But that's when I

1 knew that Carmichael's discharge pressure --

2 Q. Okay. So, this -- that alarm is what --

3 A. Yeah, it was station low suction, and it wasn't  
4 necessarily an alarm as it was a reading.

5 Q. So, it was not an alarm?

6 A. Because it didn't go to woah-woah (ph.), because it was  
7 still reading vapor pressure. The alarm that I got with it was  
8 Carmichael, low suction, and that's -- when you get a low suction  
9 alarm on the station like that, and pressure loss, it indicates a  
10 leak.

11 Q. Okay. So you actually became concerned before you  
12 received the first alarm?

13 A. No.

14 Q. I'm sorry.

15 A. Everything happened at once.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Everything came in on my screen at once. It was  
18 instantaneous, one scan, everything dropped. There was no --  
19 there was nothing leading up to it to tell me that there was a  
20 leak. My pressure was actually climbing at the area, whenever it  
21 happened.

22 Q. This screen that you're referring to. Is that the  
23 screen that is always pulled up?

24 A. That's the screen that is always pulled up. That is our  
25 center area screen, and that's how we run our pipeline. That

1 screen's always up.

2 Q. But what other screens are just normally pulled up  
3 during normal operations?

4 A. We have a western area, a central, an eastern. We have  
5 tank bars with tank indications, Turzal (ph.), we have an alarm  
6 screen, status summary screen, moisture monitor screen. We have  
7 cameras for the different terminals.

8 Q. Weather?

9 A. Yeah, we have a weather screen to tell us the weather,  
10 and we also have a computer monitor that we do our reports and  
11 everything else on.

12 Q. Now, when this first alarm came in, and you became  
13 concerned, do you start pulling up other screens to help you with  
14 the process?

15 A. I didn't do anything, pulling up any other screens. I  
16 shut down Yellow Creek; that was the first thing I did, was shut  
17 down Yellow Creek. I didn't want to fuel anything any more, no  
18 more pressure going that way. I wanted to get that section of  
19 line isolated, because I knew it was in that section of the line.  
20 So, that was the first thing I did.

21 Q. Has -- you have experience with similar type of alarms  
22 in this particular part of the pipeline?

23 A. What do you mean by that?

24 Q. In your other days of operating as a pipeline controller  
25 --

1           A.    This is my first leak.

2           Q.    This is your first leak experience?   Okay.

3           A.    I've never experienced anything like this before.   I've  
4 simulated, but I've never experienced anything like this.

5           Q.    Now, you're doing a lot of activities, data input and  
6 working the phones.   How are you deciding what to do first?

7           A.    The number one priority was getting the line shut down  
8 and getting the field personnel out there to respond.   Everything  
9 else could wait, but the first thing I had to do was to get the  
10 pressure off that section of line, and get my field personnel and  
11 emergency response up there, and I notified my supervisor so he  
12 could help out.

13          Q.    What's the value of the field people out there?

14          A.    For getting them out there?

15          Q.    Yes.

16          A.    That's extremely critical, because they know where the  
17 valves are.   They can get out there and start locating where the  
18 leak is, because at that time, the leak was not confirmed where it  
19 was at.   I never got a call from 911 saying where it was at, or --  
20 until I got a call from Ms. Helen Lucas, I didn't have any clue  
21 exactly where the leak was at.   I just knew in a certain area.  
22 So, I called people from both sides and got them heading over, and  
23 that's -- the value of them out in the field is critical, because  
24 they know the area better than everybody else.

25          Q.    Where are they located, the people that you called, in

1 relation to --

2 A. Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and Demopolis, Alabama.

3 Q. Roughly, how far in mileage is that?

4 A. You got Demopolis --

5 MR. MYERS: Hattiesburg is -- about 60 miles from  
6 Hattiesburg, and about 80 miles from Demopolis. But it takes  
7 longer to get there from Hattiesburg because of the roads.

8 BY MR. JENNER:

9 Q. So between 60 and 80 miles --

10 A. And I also called and asked John and Milton on both  
11 sides, if we had anybody in the field out that way --

12 Q. Um-hmm.

13 A. -- and we had nobody out there. John Purvis called back  
14 later and said he had a contractor in the area.

15 Q. How did the woman who called in to you, how did she know  
16 to call you?

17 A. We pass out fliers to all the -- we have, like,  
18 calendars. Dixie passes out fliers. You know, a lot of people,  
19 we go out and actually hand stuff out. She could have attended a  
20 pipeline safety meeting. We publish our 800 numbers on every  
21 single sign we put out, at every road crossing, and you know,  
22 every certain amount of distance we have a sign. It also has our  
23 800 number on it. We pick up the 800 number in here; it's a  
24 direct line to the control room, but we publish that on the  
25 website. Most of the emergency management people have that

1 number. That's the number that we give to everybody to call,  
2 because we man it 24 hours a day.

3 Q. Can you characterize the conversation you had with her?

4 A. We were both really excited. I was trying to get her  
5 location, because I wanted to see where exactly it was. That was  
6 my main concern. I wanted to know what county I needed to call to  
7 get the fire out out there, to get people evacuated. She told me  
8 that there was vapor -- well, she said it was smoke, she said it  
9 was white smoke. It sounded like an explosion. I asked her if  
10 there was a fire; she stated no. She was extremely upset with it,  
11 and I don't know if she hung up on me, or something happened, and  
12 there was no more conversation with her. But, you know, from what  
13 I got from her, I got her address, her number to call back, the  
14 county it was in, the conditions. I asked her if anybody was hurt  
15 there, and she didn't know of anything. But also I had to keep it  
16 short so I could call emergency.

17 Q. Do you have, by your station, written materials that you  
18 can refer to to see what this type of situation --

19 A. Yeah, we have an O&E book. It's got a list of all the  
20 numbers we can call. It's got a list of all the valves in the  
21 area, you know, county emergency. Everything we need is in that  
22 red book. It's a red book we keep right by our desk. We have  
23 track maps, we can -- you know, we can look at locations, roads,  
24 street maps, cities. I have the internet, I can get on there and  
25 MapQuest. I can look up a town, see where it is, cross-track it

1 with my -- that's the fastest way for me to find a city on our  
2 map, look it up and cross-reference it with our track map. Also,  
3 on our screens, on our actual data screens, if you bring up a  
4 station screen, click on the phone, go to emergency, I'll get  
5 emergency contacts on that also.

6 Q. The reference procedure you spoke of, can you tell me  
7 which ones that you actually used?

8 A. I used all of them.

9 Q. You used everything that you just said? Okay.

10 A. I used everything I said.

11 Q. Was there any type of information you wish you had  
12 access to?

13 A. The phone number -- I called City Hall first, and got --  
14 for Clarke County, and so the emergency number. Information-wise,  
15 I think everything was laid out for me. I had people helping me.  
16 Gary was laying out my tracking maps for me. I had assistance on  
17 my phones. So, as far as everything coming in, I don't think I  
18 could have had any more help or any more information that I could  
19 think of. I mean, of course, if somebody would have called in  
20 right from the get-go and told me exactly where the line leak was,  
21 that would be the best thing that could happen, but it didn't work  
22 like that.

23 Q. Okay. Now, when you're dealing with the situation, do  
24 you have other people in the control room assisting you?

25 A. Yes, I do.

1           Q.    Okay.  Can you tell me about who was there, and what  
2   assistance they provided?

3           A.    I told Robert, and I'm sure he got everybody else at --  
4   at the time, I couldn't tell you exactly who was around me.  I was  
5   focused on the phones and the computers.  I don't know what was  
6   going on behind me.  I know I was barking out orders, and people  
7   were giving me stuff.  I noticed Gary was laying out my track maps  
8   for me, and Jeffrey Young, he was helping me out on the phones.  
9   Robert and Jeff were calling all the people they need to call, and  
10  everybody was pretty much staying out of my hair and letting me do  
11  my thing, getting everything shut down.  He was helping, trying to  
12  figure out where Shebuta (ph.) was, and so it is a team effort.  I  
13  was extremely happy with everybody's response.  Everybody really  
14  helped me out.

15          Q.    You mentioned earlier this was your first time that  
16  you've had to deal with a release.  Have you gone through  
17  simulation training for similar types of situations?

18          A.    Yeah, we always simulated these -- what was the last  
19  time I was --

20               MR. GONYEAU:  The simulator that we use that's up in the  
21  Atlanta office, prior to the relocation, and here's a record of  
22  Bryan's simulation activity.  It goes back to March of '06.

23               THE WITNESS:  When did we get okayed this year, Jim?

24               MR. GONYEAU:  This year was also in March.

25               THE WITNESS:  March, okay.  In March of this year, we



1 did a simulated shut-down on the spur line. I actually shut down  
2 the line and called people like it was an actual emergency. The  
3 only thing we didn't do, we didn't call emergency responders. It  
4 was just in-house. And we also simulate with counties, they  
5 actually have emergencies, and we're involved in that, and you'll  
6 usually get a couple of those a year, which we use as training  
7 also, where we actually shut down the line and simulate an  
8 emergency. Depending on how lucky you get -- I got really lucky  
9 this year and got almost -- a lot of them, I think.

10 MR. GONYEAU: But that's a good thing, because it gets  
11 you ready for situations like this.

12 BY MR. JENNER:

13 Q. Well, let me ask you this. Did you find the simulation  
14 training valuable?

15 A. I found everything that everybody's always taught me and  
16 told me, whenever it happened, it almost came automatic to shut it  
17 down like that. It just came natural. I was trained on it for  
18 months. It just -- and when you run the line, I mean, I don't  
19 know how everybody else does it, but I always pictured the  
20 scenarios on what you're going to do at the time, and it was just  
21 one of those things where -- I just knew to isolate that section.  
22 It came natural, and it went like that, and I wasn't really  
23 thinking. I was trying to do and, you know, get all the  
24 information I could at once so I could actually figure out what  
25 was going on. But the training was invaluable with the

1 experience.

2 Q. Good. I probably have some more specific questions  
3 relating to this, but let me get through some, just, background-  
4 type questions, if that's okay.

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. If you need a break, or some water --

7 A. I'm good.

8 Q. Okay. Let me get some numbers from you. How long have  
9 you been in your current position?

10 A. I've been OQ since June of last year.

11 Q. When you say OQ, that is --

12 A. I've been qualified by the Board.

13 Q. Since June of 2006?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. What were you doing before you were qualified?

16 A. I was a utility technician with Dixie Pipeline in Noner  
17 (ph.), Georgia.

18 Q. Okay. What made you decide to become a pipeline  
19 controller?

20 A. It's just a better job, a better career move, more  
21 money, better opportunity to move up, and I was a field technician  
22 at the time, and this is more of -- you know, it's one more step  
23 up the ladder.

24 Q. How long were you a field tech?

25 A. I started with Dixie in March of '05.

1 Q. Okay, so -- just -- about a little over a year --

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. -- you got into maintenance. Okay. Before March of  
4 2005, were you also in the pipeline industry?

5 A. No, before that I was -- well, my whole career, do you  
6 want to know what I did?

7 Q. Just previous to --

8 A. Okay. '99 to '04, I was in the Navy. I was an aviation  
9 Electrician's Mate, did search and rescue, concentrating on AW. I  
10 did whatever, my tour was over there, and did a lot -- after that  
11 I got out as a manager in an amusement park in Orlando, back at  
12 home, where I'm from, and after that job, I went back to  
13 helicopters. I was a mechanic, and that was in Florida, and from  
14 that job I came on with Dixie.

15 Q. Okay. Are you exclusively a pipeline controller, or do  
16 you have other duties here?

17 A. That's all we do here.

18 Q. Is there any type of recurrent training that you receive  
19 as a part of pipeline control?

20 A. Yeah, every year we have our annual, quarterly safety  
21 meetings. We have a training in (indiscernible) with our  
22 materials on a regular basis for us to review. We have our  
23 knowledge wire (ph.). Do we have anything else on that?

24 MR. GONYEAU: Annual review.

25 THE WITNESS: I think I got the annuals, yeah.

1 BY MR. JENNER:

2 Q. I heard annual and quarterly; annual and quarterly what?

3 A. Training.

4 Q. Okay. What's that involve?

5 A. Valve training, CBP, AOP training with OQs, and then we  
6 have a knowledge wire training. I don't know the difference in  
7 all of them, but I know we do a lot of training. They just get  
8 emailed to me, and I do them.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So I don't know exactly the timing -- I just know that  
11 they say, "Do it by this date," and I try to knock them out, but  
12 yeah.

13 Q. Okay. You do that on company time?

14 A. We do it on company time. Or any time. Whenever you  
15 get time.

16 Q. I was given a few -- I have March 27th, 2006, of  
17 simulator training. That's what I'm looking at here.

18 MR. GONYEAU: When Bryan first came on board the control  
19 room, they go through a training procedure (indiscernible)  
20 controller. Throughout that period, it's hands-on group  
21 (indiscernible). They read a lot of manuals, follow procedures,  
22 that sort of thing, (indiscernible). And it's good to break it up  
23 a little bit with simulator training. That can be  
24 (indiscernible), and at that time, there were standard tests that  
25 were given to the controllers by me.

1 BY MR. JENNER:

2 Q. Now, this date is March 27th, 2006, which is before you  
3 became a qualified --

4 A. Um-hmm.

5 Q. -- controller. So this is part of the training process?

6 MR. GONYEAU: Correct. If he (indiscernible) process of  
7 becoming a stand-alone pipeline controller.

8 BY MR. JENNER:

9 Q. But do you recall -- your training program, was that in-  
10 house?

11 A. Um-hmm.

12 Q. Okay. Were there other pipeline controllers along with  
13 you? Is it an official training course?

14 A. Oh, it was just -- I was by myself.

15 Q. Okay, no other students?

16 A. No, it wasn't like a class or anything.

17 Q. Okay. When did that begin?

18 A. I guess in March, right? March of '06.

19 Q. And that went on, I guess, until June? Can you just  
20 briefly describe the process? You know, what happens in the early  
21 time, and what are you learning, and where are you --

22 A. Here's what you do. You go in and you read all of your  
23 manuals. I've already been with Dixie; it's all the same manuals,  
24 all the same stuff. Hiring you off the street or coming from the  
25 field are two totally different things. You already know a lot

1 about Dixie, how everything operates, the people, and then they  
2 put you on with a controller, and you start learning the paperwork  
3 and hydraulics. They give you your Stoner (ph.) training  
4 simulator, and you just sit down with the controller, and at first  
5 you watch what they do, and eventually it comes into you're doing  
6 it and they're watching you. It kind of rotates with time.  
7 There's a checklist that we had, so everything that could happen  
8 or has happened on the pipeline, there's a checklist that we had  
9 to go through and actually check off every instance. There's one  
10 where we had to tell somebody about it, and then another one where  
11 we had to see or describe the experience. After all that was  
12 done, and you went through like a board meeting with my manager,  
13 and he just answered -- you had to know everything about the  
14 pipeline, and if you didn't know the answer, you had to know where  
15 to find it in the book in a timely manner. They don't expect you  
16 to know everything, but they expect you to know where to find the  
17 information if you do need to know it.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And so I went through all that. I went through my on-  
20 the-job training. I went through my board over there, and we  
21 moved here in June. I don't know the exact date, but I think it  
22 was in June, and I worked another week. My first sit, I had  
23 another controller -- my first official sit, I had another  
24 controller watching what I was doing, with me, and then I  
25 officially got OQ'd. My 7-day law break, and I came back nights,

1 on a Friday night, for my first shift by myself. And that was  
2 pretty much my training.

3 Q. How long had you been operating your line?

4 A. Since the beginning. It's the only line I ever ran.

5 Q. Oh, is that right? Okay. What was the most difficult  
6 part of your training, or being a pipeline controller? That could  
7 be anything.

8 A. It's a pretty good job. Dealing with stuff like this,  
9 having a leak or something like that -- yeah, yesterday was the  
10 most difficult day I've ever had as a controller. That's for  
11 sure.

12 Q. Just for clarification, when you talk about simulator  
13 training, that can be interpreted a couple of ways, like  
14 simulation training, like you're going through the process of an  
15 emergency, you're simulating what to do. But are there actual  
16 simulators that --

17 A. I actually trained on a simulator. He's got a book  
18 right there.

19 MR. GONYEAU: It's a program that we use to actually  
20 simulate it.

21 MR. JENNER: You were waiting for that, weren't you?

22 THE WITNESS: I haven't done it since the first time.

23 MR. GONYEAU: It hasn't been operable -- that's how it  
24 was used, the last time it was used was '06, and it's never been  
25 brought back into the training process. We haven't had anybody to

1 train, except regression training.

2 BY MR. JENNER:

3 Q. So, Bryan, you were one of the last to --

4 A. I was the last one to use it, yeah.

5 Q. -- use it? Okay.

6 A. But we actually do simulations of shutdowns, physical  
7 simulations of shutdowns. We actually shut down the pipeline at  
8 just about every location on the entire pipeline during the year.  
9 They make a big deal out of it. It's mainly for the field guys  
10 and the local authorities, but we also use the time to practice  
11 for ourselves, at the same time.

12 MR. GONYEAU: There's a simulation where they actually  
13 shut down the spur lines (indiscernible) --

14 BY MR. JENNER:

15 Q. Is there much difference between shutting down a section  
16 of pipeline in northern -- South Texas than it is from another  
17 section, you know --

18 A. We have -- yeah, Virginia would be way different,  
19 because --

20 Q. Oh, sorry.

21 A. -- North Carolina, now. It depends on the time of year,  
22 line conditions, any restrictions you may have. There are so many  
23 variations on what could happen at that time. You can't just say  
24 that it's different to shut down this. Every day's different when  
25 you come in and line up your line. If you're running max rate,



1 everything on discharge, you know, your line is going to look  
2 different than if you had a stagnant line and it was just sitting  
3 there. There's so many different dynamics that can go into  
4 effect. I don't know if I'm answering what you're asking, but  
5 it's -- you can't say, you know, one side versus another. If I  
6 had a catastrophic failure like this anywhere, though, it would be  
7 the same thing. I would see it the same way, if that's what  
8 you're asking.

9 Q. You would see it in terms of alarms and --

10 A. Alarms, and it would look the same way, and I would have  
11 done the same exact thing. But there's too many different  
12 scenarios to say that shutting down one side of the line is  
13 different from the other. Now, the western side, we have  
14 detectors there, and we have to call before we shut them down,  
15 because you don't want to make an unsafe situation for them. If  
16 something happened on the spur line, you know that'd be a little  
17 bit different, because I could just close that valve off and keep  
18 my main line off, so if something happened on there, it would be a  
19 little bit different on our main line operations, per se, where it  
20 actually occurs on the line.

21 If something happened in West Texas, I could probably  
22 keep my flow rate going on the east side of the line.

23 Q. Okay. You've heard the term "nuisance alarm"?

24 A. Um-hmm.

25 Q. What is that?

1           A.    Alarms of things that aren't really an alarm.  Something  
2   that it would service, and it keeps re-alarming, that would be a  
3   nuisance alarm.  You know, something that's not really an alarm,  
4   and it comes in.

5           Q.    Okay.  The initial alarm that you received, under any  
6   circumstance would that be considered a nuisance alarm?

7           A.    No way.

8           Q.    Okay.

9           A.    Yeah, that's -- there's no way that would be a nuisance.

10          Q.    Okay.  Are nuisance alarms a problem during a shift?  Is  
11   that --

12          A.    Not a problem.  We get them; sometimes, we have to wait,  
13   because there's certain stuff we can't silence.  We have to wait  
14   for permission to silence.  If something goes out of service in  
15   the middle of the night, the chromatograph or something like that,  
16   and we can't get somebody out there, you know, we have to wait to  
17   get permission to silence those alarms.  So you may have alarms  
18   coming in overnight that you don't like.  Starting up, stopping  
19   pumps, we get ready to change the lines, it sounds like maybe a  
20   major line condition, but you know, to say that those are  
21   nuisances -- they're very helpful at the same time, because you  
22   know when you have a line condition, to change -- when you start  
23   getting ready to change lines.

24          Q.    The reason I'm going in this direction is that we had an  
25   informal conversation earlier that what we've all seen in the past

1 is, sometimes when there's a delay in reaction from the pipeline  
2 controller, it's because an alarm that comes in that is either not  
3 observed immediately, or misinterpreted, and there are various  
4 reasons for that. That, you don't think, was a problem for you  
5 given the information that was coming in?

6 A. No, I responded to the alarm immediately. I always  
7 check all my alarms, you know, even just for that fact. I don't  
8 want to be the person that did that.

9 Q. Now, shutting down a pipeline is a big deal, as I don't  
10 have to tell you. Is there a voice in your head that says, "Maybe  
11 I should wait a few moments" --

12 A. On this one, it maybe took me 20 seconds to get the  
13 balls -- or, excuse me, to get the courage up to close Yellow  
14 Creek station. I thought Yellow Creek station was actually  
15 (indiscernible). But, I mean, I shut it down, just slammed it  
16 shut, started backing off from there.

17 Q. At what point did you inform other people around you  
18 that there was a possible leak?

19 A. Immediately.

20 Q. Okay. Is that a matter of just calling out, or --

21 A. Yeah, I turned around and yelled at Robert, "I have a  
22 leak," and I yelled at Brad to shut his stuff down. It took him a  
23 couple of minutes, and then what Robert did, I'm sure he went and  
24 got you all, so I don't know. From that point on, I just kind of  
25 zoned in. I wasn't really paying attention to what was going on

1 behind me.

2 Q. Is there anything about the Skada (ph.) system that --  
3 it needs to be improved, that there's some shortcomings, based on  
4 your experience yesterday, or other experiences?

5 A. Yeah, I don't think there's anything that would have  
6 helped me with yesterday's situation. It's a catastrophic  
7 failure, I seen it right away. I could have had more remote block  
8 valves in between the sites; we didn't have any in between sites,  
9 it was closed off. Of course, that's something that could be  
10 improved, but -- then the Skada system itself, operating trade,  
11 they gave me no problems, they did exactly what I asked them to  
12 and shut down. They gave me correct readings. I was happy with  
13 it.

14 Q. Great. Let me change directions on you again, and get  
15 some more background-type information.

16 What shift do you work? What are your hours?

17 A. We work with sort of the DuPont schedule. Start of a  
18 shift would be a Friday night, work four nights, you're off three  
19 days.

20 Q. What about Friday -- at what time --

21 A. 5:30 at night. We worked from 5:30 to 5:30.

22 Q. Twelve-hour shifts?

23 A. Twelve-hour shifts.

24 Q. Okay. And you work three days, three consecutive days

25 --

1 A. Four nights.

2 Q. Four nights.

3 A. We're off three days.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Off one day, work three nights, off three days, and then  
6 we work four days and we're off again.

7 Q. Without me doing the math, how many hours is that in a -  
8 -

9 A. It works out to be 48 -- however, 48 and 36.

10 MR. GONYEAU: 84 hours every other week.

11 MR. JENNER: Would that be two -- okay.

12 BY MR. JENNER:

13 Q. How -- I know 12-hour shifts are pretty standard in the  
14 industry. How does that work for you? Great?

15 A. Not that I know of.

16 Q. If you -- do you like working in the night shifts?

17 A. Um-hmm.

18 Q. You do?

19 A. I love working nights.

20 Q. You love working nights? Why's that?

21 A. I don't have to make phone calls, there's not as many  
22 bosses here. It's just -- you know, you can just run your line  
23 There's no people out in the field, working. Nobody follows you.

24 Q. It's a quieter --

25 A. Yeah, it's just a nicer shift. You just do your thing.

1 With the way our line works, that's when we fill up our tanks.  
2 It's easier to run a line when you're filling something up then  
3 when you're shipping stuff out, so I just prefer nights, myself.

4 Q. One thing that we ask people to do is to sort of  
5 reconstruct a 72-hour history, and so let's try to take you back  
6 three days.

7 A. So Tuesday, you want?

8 Q. If you can do Monday, and leading up to the accident,  
9 about what your shifts were, and --

10 A. Okay. Monday I worked day shift.

11 Q. Monday, day shift, which was --

12 A. 5:30.

13 Q. 5:30 --

14 A. 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

15 Q. Okay. And what do you do after 5:30 p.m.?

16 A. I go home.

17 Q. Okay. And then what? In terms of, like --

18 A. Oh, when I go to bed?

19 Q. Sleeping, things like that.

20 A. I usually go home, eat. I got two kids. Play with them  
21 a little bit. I'm usually in bed by 9:00. I usually don't stay  
22 up any later than that, depending on what's on TV.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I don't know exactly what time. I think I went to bed  
25 at like 8:00 that night. I remember I was tired.

1 Q. What time do you think you slept to?

2 A. Oh, we get up at 4:00.

3 Q. 4:00 a.m.?

4 A. Um-hmm.

5 Q. Okay, then what do you do?

6 A. Take a shower, whatever, drink coffee, come in, come in  
7 to work. Whenever I work, I just basically work.

8 Q. Okay. How long is your commute at that time of day?

9 A. In the mornings, it's 45 minutes. In the afternoon, on  
10 day shifts, it's an hour and a half. Unless I ride with somebody  
11 in the HOV lane, and then it cuts off a little bit of time.

12 Q. Tuesday, your shift, same thing?

13 A. Same thing, all week.

14 Q. So Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday --

15 A. Yeah. Wednesday was Halloween. I went trick-or-  
16 treating. I hooked the trailer up to my truck and drove the kids  
17 around the neighborhood.

18 Q. Okay, so that was after 5:30 sometime --

19 A. Oh yeah. I think that was at like 6:45, and we got  
20 back. I was in bed by 9:00 Wednesday night.

21 Q. Okay. And what time did you sleep to?

22 A. 4:00.

23 Q. Okay. Now, you've got a schedule that bounces around.  
24 How's your schedule, how's your sleep?

25 A. I sleep pretty good. I don't have any problems

1 sleeping. Daytime, depending if something wakes you up, it could  
2 mess you up a little bit. I got my sleep pattern down where I  
3 could -- it took me a good six months to get adjusted to this  
4 schedule, but right now I got it down where I can go to sleep  
5 pretty much when I want, as long as I keep a dark room.

6 Q. How do you -- what strategy do you use to adjust between  
7 working between the night shift and the day shift?

8 A. Coming off of nights, I wake up early. I wake up at  
9 like 8:00, 9:00 in the morning. I go to bed at like 6:00; I only  
10 sleep a couple of hours. And then I go back to bed at a normal  
11 time, like at 8:00, 9:00 that night, I'll go back to bed, and then  
12 that'll put me back onto a regular shift on days. I'm coming off  
13 of days tonight; I usually stay up, you know, watch the late-night  
14 shows, go to sleep at like 1:00, and then I'll wake up at 8:00 or  
15 9:00, and then I'll piddle around the house, do something, and I  
16 usually go back to sleep at like 11:30, and then I sleep until  
17 4:00 in the afternoon to get me back onto nights.

18 And then, coming off of nights, the difference between  
19 my night sleeping and my day sleeping, days, I'll take a couple of  
20 hours when I get off. At night, I go straight to bed as soon as I  
21 walk in the door, pretty much. I'll jump out of the shower, I go  
22 straight to bed. So on night shifts, I'm usually asleep by 6:30,  
23 and then I wake up at like 3:00. I sleep more when I'm on nights  
24 than I do when I'm on day shift, because I ain't got nothing to do  
25 but sleep.



1 Q. Okay. So your shift Thursday, what time did that begin?

2 A. 5:30 a.m.

3 Q. And what time -- so, okay. Did you have to work past  
4 your normal stop time on Thursday?

5 A. No, actually I got out of here right on time.

6 Q. Okay. So you went into Thursday just like any other  
7 day, you felt good, and --

8 A. Yeah. Everything was fine. Had my coffee, woke up. I  
9 stopped by Burger King, ate some breakfast. Everything was going  
10 great.

11 Q. Okay. Good. Your fitness, any -- you a healthy person?

12 A. Yeah, so far. I've had some problems here lately, but  
13 I've been cleared to work, and everything's perfectly fine right  
14 now, for the most part.

15 Q. Vision and hearing?

16 A. Vision is good. I had Lasik surgery, I can see now. I  
17 can hear. I don't need glasses, I don't have to squint.

18 Q. Is there a required company physical when you began  
19 working here?

20 A. Well, when I began here --

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. DOT physical we had to pass.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. That's for field personnel. Do office people have to do  
25 it, Jim? Oh, okay, yeah. Once you get into the office, you don't

1 have to do your -- if you're a field employee, you have to do,  
2 like, your respiratory and (indiscernible) --

3 Q. Great. Anything you'd like to add about this situation  
4 that you think may be able to help the industry, help the company,  
5 make it a little safe, now that you reflect on this?

6 A. Not really. I don't -- I tried to do the best I could  
7 on shutting down everything, and process all the information I  
8 could, so everything I was trained to do really helped me out. I  
9 really couldn't ask for any better training here, any better help.  
10 I was really surprised how good people helped out. The only thing  
11 I think would have helped us out in the control room better would  
12 be if we had cross-training people available. In that situation,  
13 that would have been great, to have somebody else that was capable  
14 also right there --

15 Q. Cross-training someone who's familiar with your --

16 A. With our system, yeah. That would be the only thing  
17 that could have helped me.

18 Q. Great. Thank you very much. If there's -- if I have  
19 any questions that I think of at a later date, would you have a  
20 problem with me getting in touch with you?

21 A. No, you can call me on my cell phone, or home phone up  
22 here, email me or whatever.

23 Q. Whatever.

24 A. I'm easy.

25 Q. Okay. Well, thank you very much.

1           MR. JENNER:   Okay.   We'll go around the room, you can  
2   introduce yourself, and ask questions.

3           MR. MYERS:   This is Jeff Myers.   I just wanted to  
4   clarify; Bryan said that cross-training would be helpful.   Some of  
5   the desks in the room are cross-trained between them, and it is  
6   very helpful.   In this case, Dixie Pipeline is a partnership of  
7   enterprises, and the partner doesn't allow us to utilize the  
8   controllers any way we like.   They don't allow anyone to work for  
9   Dixie Pipeline, and they don't allow Dixie Pipeline employees to  
10   work anything else in their room, so local management agrees with  
11   Bryan.   We would love to have some cross-training going on, but  
12   it's a bigger issue than that.

13          MR. JENNER:   Okay.   Anything else?

14          MR. MYERS:   Other than that, no, I think that's all I  
15   have, Steve.   Nothing else.

16          MR. JENNER:   Okay.   Any other questions?

17          MR. GONYEAU:   Steve, this is Jim Gonyeau.   I had a  
18   couple of things I picked up listening to Bryan relaying the  
19   events.   He had a call with Helen Lucas, that he lost that call  
20   that came across the emergency number, is that right, Bryan?

21          THE WITNESS:   That's right.

22          MR. GONYEAU:   Going forward, I think it would be  
23   advantageous that we record emergency calls.   Currently, we only  
24   record incoming calls on the normal line.   In emergency calls,  
25   there's no record.   In this instance, it would have benefited him,

1 had he lost that call, he had a number to call back to reference.  
2 But we don't even show that on the caller ID --

3 THE WITNESS: Yeah, caller ID, I forgot about that.

4 MR. GONYEAU: -- on the emergency line. I think that  
5 would help, you know, in the future. One other point. You were  
6 asking Bryan about, I believe, the question was, "Had this  
7 occurrence happened in a different section of the line, would you  
8 have done something differently?" -- something along those lines.  
9 Dixie is set up where the eastern part of the system is all of our  
10 loading terminals. We have eight loading facilities, and the  
11 loading facilities all have a take-off valve, and you have the  
12 option of get rid of a lot of the gas real quick. In the west,  
13 where Bryan's leak was, it's isolated. You only have so many  
14 points where you can pull gas off the system. So yes, it was a  
15 great place to have a leak, but if he would have shut it down  
16 differently, had it been in the east, we had more options he would  
17 have followed. That's all I have.

18 MR. JENNER: Okay. Please. Anything else?

19 MR. GONYEAU: No. For the record, he did a heck of a  
20 job.

21 MR. JENNER: Great.

22 THE WITNESS: (Indiscernible.)

23 MR. JENNER: Yeah.

24 THE WITNESS: Maybe if they'd let us --

25 MR. JENNER: I'll go around the room again, if there's

1 anything else -- no? Okay. It is 3:15, and we'll complete this  
2 interview.

3 (Whereupon, at 3:15 p.m., the interview in the above-  
4 entitled matter concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: Carmichael, Mississippi Accident

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-08-MP-001

PLACE: Houston, TX

DATE: November 2, 2007

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to  
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

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Matt Dycus  
Transcriber